

6 INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Clinton fits the bill in Blair's new world order

WASHINGTON DIARY
Martin Kettle

SO MUCH guff has been written over the years about the Anglo-American "special relationship" that one tries instinctively to avoid using such an overused and hubristic phrase. And yet, as the philosopher said of the elephant, it may be hard to describe but you know one when you see one. And in Washington last week we undoubtedly saw a special relationship.

Tony Blair was interested in Bill Clinton before Clinton became interested in Blair. From the moment that Clinton emerged at the head of the nomination-chasing pack in 1992, Blair spotted something that he knew he could learn from. Most of the comment which picked up on Clinton's appeal for the Labour moderates at that time focused on the Democratic campaign techniques—the spin doctoring, the media strategy, the focus groups and so on. But Blair's take on Clinton was always strategic, not tactical. What struck Blair about Clinton was that he had managed to halt the forward march of the transatlantic right.

Blair believed that Clinton's victory in 1992 showed both that it was possible to outsmart the right and also to defeat them. These were powerful reasons for a Labour politician at the end of 1992, when Labour was still traumatised by its failure to defeat John Major in that year's general election. And Blair has always wanted Clinton to succeed and to survive ever since, believing that Labour's task of persuading the British electorate to elect the Conservatives would be easier if its leaders could say that the Americans had already done something similar.

Between 1994 and 1996, Blair was extremely anxious about Clinton's re-election. Not because Clinton was a personal friend—at that stage he wasn't—but because Clinton's defeat in 1996 would have



been presented by the Conservatives as proof, and might even have actually shown, that a modernised centre-left government had nothing lasting to offer the electorate in the modern world. Clinton's successful re-election was a very great relief to Blair, and Blair unquestionably believed that his own defeat of Major last year was made much easier because the Democrats still controlled the White House. It meant that Labour seemed to be cutting with the grain of world opinion.

This, far more than any other factor, explains why Blair was the perfect ally to stand by the side of a beleaguered Clinton in Washington last week. The two men may now be friends, but in Blair's eyes, Clinton's survival is overwhelmingly a political rather than a personal imperative. Never once during the Washington visit did Blair even imply that he believed Clinton to be a good man in his private life. He con-

spicuously avoided saying that he believed Clinton's denial of an affair with Monica Lewinsky. In every other respect, however, Blair stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the president, extolling his leadership, commending his policies, identifying with his ideas and promoting Clinton's campaign to defy his attackers.

Blair did this because he knew Clinton was absolutely clear in his own mind that Clinton's tenure of office was an essential precondition and is now an essential buttress of his own. It was this, rather than any other factor, which led him to say, at last Friday's highly charged press conference in the White House East Room, that Clinton was "someone I could trust, someone I could rely upon, someone I am proud to call not just a colleague, but a friend".

It was this, too, that explained Blair's most emotive gesture of solidarity during his stay—his toast of Clinton at the White House banquet

Saddam Hussein has to be prevented from waging war, particularly against Israel. His need to secure my domestic doubters that he is a Labour leader who will not flinch, as his predecessors might, from sending British troops into combat (Blair is on the verge of becoming the first Labour leader to send British forces into a non-imperial engagement since Abdo in Korea nearly half a century ago); and, finally, his aiding and determining belief that a Democratic president has to be supported internationally in order that a Democrat will be re-elected in home. This, I think, is the starting point of it all.

That may be how he sees it, but many will have a different view. They will see yet another British prime minister (Ted Heath was really the only modern exception who appears overkeen to sit like a parrot on the shoulder of yet another US president. They will see the hubris in the over-eager striving to appear on a par with a demonstrably more important but personally embarrassed leader. They will sense that Blair has turned his back on Europe in favour of America, as so many of his predecessors, both Labour and Conservative, have done before.

Perhaps, in the end, that is how it will eventually appear to history too. But it is much too early to draw too many conclusions. Blair and his advisers are sensitive to the charge that they are simply interested in buying off the post-campaign techniques and social policies from the US in much the same way that earlier British applicants in Washington bought weapons.

In an interview with the Guardian last week, Blair laid out his hopes of bringing the American Democratic and the European social democratic parties together in a standing policy network to hammer out common responses to the social changes caused by the global economy. His plan is not simply transatlantic, he suggested, but international. If that is true, Blair's ultimate goal is to put the special relationship at the service of something much more ambitious and much less one-sided.

For Blair, the Iraq crisis is about three things: his genuine belief that

bankers and finance ministers constantly pledge full consultation, there are two principles they are unlikely to surrender.

First, the bank's primary task is monetary stability and the avoidance of inflation, rather than growth or job creation. Second, the bank's president and board are picked by the governments of member states, not the European parliament. Both principles are enshrined in the Maastricht treaty.

Actually, we don't have any powers at all. Rando-Plath admitted last week after launching the draft report from the parliament's monetary committee. It is, however, the opening shot in a long campaign which some MEPs see as their equivalent of the British parliament's centuries-long struggle with the Crown over financial control.

There are, however, three key differences between the House of Commons of the early 17th century and the European parliament. The first is that the European parliament's own credibility is only shakily established. Scandals over MEPs' abuses of expenses, their blithe disregard of the rule that says they should let their private financial interests, and the dismaying low turnout of voters to elect them, sap its authority.

The second difference is that the European parliament may have too

power over the EU budget, but it does not have the crucial right—which was the key to the campaigns of Pym and Hampden against the Crown—to authorize taxation. The third difference is that the European parliament is battling not only the bank but Europe's elected national governments and its finance ministries as well.

It is for this reason that Rando-Plath's deputy chairman of the monetary committee, British Labour MEP Alan Donnelly, has formed a new group called the Euro Forum. This curiously brings together MEPs and members of the finance ministries of various national parliaments, in an alliance of the elected to bring a double influence to bear on the appointed members of the bank's board.

With its new powers of co-decision with the Council of Ministers enshrined in the Amsterdam treaty, the parliament can expect in the long run to win greater accountability. But much will depend on the new central bank's skill in managing the single currency, the euro. The first battle will be the clash between the bank's duty to prevent inflation and the political imperative to free Europe from its stranglehold of mass unemployment. Plath has warned warning that the "European" parliament intends to seize its historic opportunity.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
February 12 1998

INVESTMENT. WHO WINS THE PROFESSIONALS' VOTE?



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Cavalier spirit stirs parliamentarians



Europe this week
Martin Walker

CHRISTIA Rando-Plath is a ginger-haired socialist lawyer from Hamburg who at first sight appears an unlikely candidate to be the Euros and Hampdens who fought to establish Parliament's authority against King Charles I in the years before England's civil war. Their campaign established both the legitimacy of the elected and power over the public purse, which has been the foundation of parliamentary democracy.

From her crucial seat as chairman of the European parliament's monetary sub-committee, Rando-

Plath has launched a campaign which could eventually prove as important. This is not only because she is asserting the claims of parliament over the economic policies of Europe, but also because her campaign can exploit the discreet revolution that is now under way in the European constitutional system.

The European Union at first glance looks like a rough copy of the American division of powers between the executive in the White House, the legislature in Congress, and the judiciary in the Supreme Court. Europe has its elected parliament, its executive in the Commission, and its own European Court of Justice, which has been essential to building the common market. However, so to this structure Europe has granted the Council of Ministers, which is where the governments of the member states meet and take the real decisions.

Now a new body is being grafted on to the constitutional system, the new European central bank (ECB). Americans have noticed how under Paul Volcker and Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve Board has assumed an authority that the Founding Fathers never envisioned. The Fed's power just grew and grew. In contrast, the ECB's powers

have been built in from the start: to be independent of political influence, and to have the single task of ensuring monetary stability.

The ECB's president and board, nominated by member governments and endorsed by the European parliament, are to have fixed terms of eight years to guarantee their independence. Their powers are immense, not only to fix the monetary policies of Europe, its money supply and interest rates, but to play a global role as custodians of a currency which is seen likely to rival the dollar as a store of international value.

Enter Rando-Plath. The European parliament last week called for a series of amendments that include the power to veto and, if necessary, to dislodge the president of the new bank, which it promises to be a steep uphill battle to force the ECB into accountability over the managers of the single currency.

If granted, the MEPs' list of demands, from quarterly appearances by the bank board before parliament, to suggestions that summaries of the minutes of board meetings be published, would give parliament sweeping extension in its authority and power. It is unlikely to get it soon because, though

The Week in Britain James Lewis

Davis falls on his sword over Camelot controversy

PETER DAVIS resigned as regulator of the National Lottery in the wake of a successful libel action by Richard Branson, Britain's best-known capitalist, who claimed that Guy Snowden had tried in 1993 to bribe him to drop his bid to run the lottery on a not-for-profit basis.

In the event, the contract to operate the lottery went to Camelot, a consortium in which G-Tech, an American company of which Mr Snowden was chairman, has a 22.5 per cent stake. Mr Snowden quit his chairmanship following Mr Branson's victory.

Mr Davis had survived earlier demands for his resignation when he was found to have accepted free flights and hospitality from G-Tech. He insisted that he had done nothing improper. This time, however, he went, following a long interview with his boss Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary. The Tories claimed that he had been sacked. Mr Smith insisted that he had resigned.

The flurry of departures reflected public unease about the handsome profits made by Camelot, by virtue of having made the lottery such a success. Mr Smith now says that, when Camelot's franchise period expires, he would like to see it replaced by a non-profit operator. So Mr Branson's Virgin Group may still be in with a chance.

There will, however, be some awkward problems to overcome. When competitive tenders are next invited to run the lottery, Camelot will still hold a strong hand because it already has the outlets, the equipment (provided by G-Tech) and the staff to do the job.

What the Government sometimes likes to call "the people's lottery" will still, in effect, be a state-owned monopoly. And any organisation capable of mounting that kind of operation would have to invest heavily in organisation and computer terminals and would be entitled to recover the investment out of profits.

and party circles was directed at Lord Irvine — denounced as pompous, bullying, interfering, arrogant, censorious and pulled-up — for resurrecting the Cook affair just as it appeared to be ebbing away.

LABOUR could face another backbench rebellion over its plans to water down legislation on workers' rights and to use Tory laws to crack down on strikers. More than 80 MPs were reported to be ready to vote against the Government.

The dispute surfaced in the prison service, where officers were told by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, that the legal ban on industrial action in prisons, imposed in 1994, would remain in place. Union leaders accused him of reneging on pre-election promises to restore their rights.

The main row centres on a mini-pledge to restore union recognition "where a majority of the relevant workforce vote in a ballot for the union to represent them". Unions argue that the result should be determined by a simple majority among those taking part in the ballot, while employers' organisations claim there should be a majority among the entire workforce, regardless of whether they vote.

The two sides have failed to reach a compromise.

SOME CABINET ministers were furious about being ordered by the Prime Minister to stay away from World Cup football matches in order to stop the Tories from accusing them of enjoying the tuppings of office. "Tickets are hard enough to come by without having stands full of Cabinet ministers travelling at the taxpayers' expense," said a Blair spokesman.

ARTHUR SCARGILL, miners' leader and class warrior, will have the irony of seeing his daughter married off this year to a former colliery manager who helped to shut down Grimethorpe, Britain's most famous pit.

Margaret Scargill, a doctor, will marry James Logan, whose colliery — the only one in the world to be run by his prospective bride's mother, Anne, during a long and bitter campaign to save the pit.

The Lord Chancellor's thinking infuriated the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who was otherwise occupied in Washington. "We do not have a scheme for banning stories that are legitimate," said Mr Blair's spokesman. "I do not know anyone other than Derry Irvine who thought the Robin Cook story was other than a legitimate one to write."

This was the strongest put-down yet for the Lord Chancellor, who has made a series of miscalculations in recent months but remains close to the Prime Minister. Blair has his mentor and head of chambers when the young Mr Blair embarked on his legal career.

Much of the anger in government



Healthy option... Bart's will continue as a specialist heart and cancer centre

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN WILKINSON

Bart's hospital is granted a reprieve

David Brittle

THE historic St Bartholomew's hospital in the City of London will be saved, ministers said last week after accepting the recommendations of an independent review of the capital's "under-pressure" health services.

Bart's, founded in the 12th century, will continue to treat patients as a specialist centre for cancer and heart conditions.

However, it will lose its role as a general local hospital, and its accident and emergency department will not reopen. Among other decisions emerging from the review are that closure of the A&E unit at Guy's hospital, south London, is to go ahead, and that Queen Mary's hospital, Roehampton, will be run down and replaced by a small community unit.

The review, headed by Sir Leslie Turnbull, a past president of the Royal College of Physicians, was set up by Labour to help it deal with issues that had bedevilled the last government.

The Health Secretary, Frank Dobson, said that the review's proposals were accepted in full. "The Turnbull report recommends that Bart's should not close. The Government agrees. We will not countenance the closure of that great hospital which has served the people of London for 875 years."

Closure of Bart's was proposed by the Tomlinson report in 1992 and set in train the following year by the Conservative government of John Major. The A&E department has shut and its other services were due to transfer to the Royal London in Whitechapel.

The review says that this does still happen once a new, 900-bed Royal London is built in seven or eight years' time, but that should be replaced by a "small number of tertiary services" and also run in minor injuries unit.

Campaigners who have been illing to save Bart's welcomed the decision even though it fell short of their original goal. Doreen Shelle, who chairs the Bart's Patients' Campaign, said: "The hospital has always been excellent heart specialists — in fact it's been in the world, I am now very optimistic about the hospital's future."

The closure of Guy's A&E unit is likely to prove tricky for ministers. Labour claimed during the general election campaign that it would be "stopped on day one of a Labour government".

Dobson pledges to cut illness gap

Sarah Boswell

THE Government firmly pledged last week to tackle the big social issues — poverty, bad housing, unemployment and other forms of deprivation — to prevent the publication of stories which it deemed out to be in the public interest. By this means, he considered, newspapers could be banned from revealing undesirable stories such as the one about the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, and his live-in mistress.

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Much of the anger in government

ing gap between the health of rich and poor.

The green paper, Our Healthier Nation, shows that a man in Manchester lives five years fewer than a man in Oxfordshire, and death rates from lung cancer are 20 per cent higher in the North than the national average.

The previous government had banned all mention of inequalities in health, Mr Dobson claimed. "Well, things have changed. We do recognise inequalities in health."

The government recognises that poverty, poor housing, low wages, unemployment, air pollution, crime and disorder can all make people ill in both body and mind.

Public health would now be an issue for many government departments, such as employment, transport and environment, he said. The Government has two key aims to extend people's lives and the number of years people spend without illness, which has not risen as fast as longevity; and to improve the health of the worst off in society. The public health minister, Teresa Williams, said it marked an end to the "nanny state" approach of the last government. "In the 1970s we saw the growth of individualism, victim

blaming and finger wagging, and I you were ill it was down to your healthy lifestyle."

The green paper proposes a "national contract for better health" between government, local authorities and the individual. Ten billion £200 million of National Lottery money will finance healthy living centres. These might have fitness facilities and services such as physiotherapy, preventive programmes and information for all age groups.

The document got a warm welcome for many who believed that it was the first time that the Government had been prepared to put in, and money to be spent on, the health of the nation.

Karen Calver, director of the Institute of Health Services Management, said: "Without measurable targets there will be less pressure for change and less scope to hold [the government] to account. The real problem in public health has been how to do it."

Roy Taylor, president of the Association of Directors of Social Services, regretted that the "large of alcohol abuse was not addressed."

QUINCY NEWS
February 15 1998

Shake-up urged after child sex trial

Duncan Campbell

CHILD was made for a full review of juvenile trials after the acquittal last week at the Old Bailey in London of four boys aged 10 and 11 for rape and indecent assault, the youngest ever to face such charges in Britain.

Children's organisations claimed that the court was the wrong place for such hearings and urged a review of the system.

Three boys, two aged 10 and one 11, were acquitted of rape and indecent assault on a girl aged nine at a London primary school last May. A fourth boy was acquitted of indecent assault.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) defended its decision to bring the prosecutions. A spokesman said: "It was a complex case which was reviewed at every stage."

The spokesman added that the CPS had been in regular consultation with the police and treasury counsel. Because of the seriousness of the charge, she said, the case had been handled with "thoroughness and sensitivity".

The call for a review, from both the National Society for the Prevention

of Cruelty to Children and the Children's Legal Centre, have come because of uneasiness felt about the process of children as young as that appearing in a high-security, high-profile court such as the Old Bailey. Carolyn Hamilton, director of the Children's Legal Centre, said such a trial should not be repeated. Both the location and the system under which the children were tried was wrong.

"I have grave doubts whether children of that age can understand what is going on in the court and can concentrate for that length of time," Ms Hamilton said. "I don't think it's suitable or appropriate for them to appear at the Old Bailey."

We need to think more about the adversarial approach and whether it is right both for the victim and the accused."

She said that although people are meant to be tried by a jury of their peers, it was clear that a verdict would not be entrusted to a dozen 10-year-olds. However, the accused and the victim of the same age were meant to be able to understand the proceedings.

The NSPCC has also expressed its concern about the trial. A spokesman said: "The NSPCC believes that a formal adult court, setting is an inappropriate place to deal with children, whether they are victims, defendants or witnesses."

Anti-Murdoch vote in Lords

THE Government suffered an embarrassing defeat in the Lords on Monday when 23 Labour rebels voted to outlaw Rupert Murdoch's newspaper price-cutting tactics, with *Evening News* and *Mail on Sunday*.

The peers protested that Mr Murdoch's Times had ruthlessly undercut its competitors in a campaign that threatened the survival of the independent and the diversity of the British press.

The Government, anxious to end a row with Mr Murdoch, sought the ban and will have to overturn it in the Commons. While Tony Blair can easily do this with his age majority, he faces another row among Labour backbenchers.

A spokesman for the Department of Trade and Industry said: "The Government will consider the implications of the vote and how to address the House of Commons."

Although Mr Blair has successfully won over or neutralised the papers he owns, many Labour backbenchers remain hostile, remembering what the Sun newspaper had done to Labour in the past. They will use the Commons debate to express their anger.

In a debate on the Competition Bill, which aims to protect consumers from unfair practices, the peers moved for an amendment by Liberal Democrat Lord McNally which would prohibit a newspaper from abusing its position in the market. The ban would stop papers below the marginal cost of production on a permanent basis.



Leutenant Mel Rees, left, and Lieutenant Sue Moore, right, will assume command of a Royal Navy warship. The officers, both aged 26, will each take charge of a fast patrol boat

Divorcees may have to pay to see children

Anna Parkins

DIVORCING parents may have to pay to see their children, the Social Security Minister, Frank Field, indicated this week in a move which delighted the critics of the Child Support Agency (CSA) but which legal experts said was unsustainable.

Although he made MPs. "You can't access to maintenance," sources afterwards indicated that Mr Field, the man charged with "winning the unworkable" in welfare reform was attracted to the idea that "if you're paying for your child you should have the right to see it, and if you're seeing it, you should pay."

Spending in a Commons debate

on the much-reviled CSA, Mr Field said that at the moment the parents with care were doing a trade with their ex-husbands, paying less maintenance but denying access to the children.

Officials at the Department of Social Security said Mr Field was "thinking aloud" and that no decisions had been taken; but Mr Field was not directly involved in it. But when Labour was in opposition Mr Field conducted a series of reviews as chairman of the cross-party social security committee, and it is a matter he has studied closely.

At the moment the courts will not link maintenance and access, including that if the welfare of the child or

children is paramount, financial considerations must be secondary. Mr Field also indicated that abolition of the CSA was not an option, even though, in a devastating assessment, he admitted that the agency was a failure which had "inflicted damage" on many people's lives. He promised to bring forward plans for reform by the summer.

Since 1993, when the agency was established, protests by angry parents at what they felt was an arbitrary and anonymous system forced continual alteration of the maintenance formula.

Mr Field said the system could be simplified by linking rates of maintenance with tax bands.

All Saints, took the best British single award and the best video award for their hit *Never Ever*.

Another special award went to Elton John, who released out in a duet in a medley of songs from the film *The Full Monty*, which won the Best Soundtrack Award.

Williams did a good impression of a grating leather-clad Mick Jagger while Jones had to dodge the customary leathers thrown from the audience.

Veteran rockers Fleetwood Mac brought the evening to a close, playing a medley of their hit following receipt of the award for lifetime achievement.

The Spice Girls, who dominated last year's ceremony, won an honorary award for "exceptional commercial success". As predicted, their new rivals,

In Brief

THE Social Security Secretary, Harry Harman, moved to distance growing alarm among the disabled over the Government's welfare plans by announcing new measures to assess the financial circumstances of claimants before benefits are cut.

POLICE in many parts of England and Wales are in effect operating a policy of decriminalisation with regard to possession of cannabis, according to new figures showing a nine-fold rise in cautions from 1985 to 1995 but only a two-fold rise in the number of prosecutions.

THE Government said it would have to vet all new varieties of genetically-modified oil seed rape in a move which effectively blocks for years the planting of such crops. The decision follows protests from environmentalists, government agencies and newspapers.

FORTY-FOUR per cent of children suffer allergies because of their parents' health, according to the British Heart Foundation.

BRITISH Airways launched an investigation after the body of a male shipwreck was found in the undergarments of a jet that had flown from Dublin to Amsterdam to Gatwick airport.

BRIAN FREEMAN, old worker in Romania, was told he will not face charges following accusations that he "sexually corrupted" a nine-year-old girl near the Sinaia orphanage where she lives.

THE cost of living in London has rocketed, making it the 10th most expensive city in the world, according to a survey by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

ALLIANCEIST Andy Elson and his team-mates Bertrand Picaud of Switzerland and Wim Vermeiren of Belgium failed in their bid to fly around the world when the Bredford Orbiter 2 balloon came down in Burma after initially being refused entry into Chinese air space.

ELEN FIELDING won the British Book Awards Best of the Year for her novel *Bridge Jones's Diary*.

ENOCH POWELL, the maverick politician seen by some as one of the greatest free-thinkers of his generation and by others as the man who contributed most to poisoning race relations in Britain, has died, aged 88.

Correction: page 12
Obituary, page 29

Correction: A photograph of a mural in Derry in the February 8 issue was incorrectly captioned. The mural showed a young nationalist with a petrol bomb in the 1969 Bogside clashes with the RUC. It did not depict the 1972 Bloody Sunday killings as stated.

Labour hoists jobless total

Seamus Milne

THE Government is to publish an internationally recognised monthly measure of unemployment which will push up the official jobless total by around 500,000 from April, after more than 18 years of bitter argument about "fiddled" dole figures.

The new statistic, an International Labour Organisation measure called from the official Labour Force Survey, is currently at 1.85 million, and will be released alongside the existing benefit claimant count, which has fallen below 1.4 million.

The Government's decision, following a review by the Office of National Statistics, was given an enthusiastic welcome by the Trades Union Congress, the Liberal Democrats and the Unemployment Unit (UU) pressure group, which did so much in the Tory years to discredit repeated changes in the calculation of unemployment.

A total of 31 "adjustments" to the jobs count cut well over 1 million from the official figure, which if it was still calculated on the pre-1979 basis would currently be 2.87 million. The previous administration also encouraged dole claimants to

shift to incapacity and sickness benefits to bring down the unemployment numbers.

The existing count records only those who are unemployed and eligible to claim the Jobseeker's Allowance, which imposes stringent means tests and availability for work tests, and excludes the under-18s and over-60s.

The ILO-recognised Labour Force Survey (LFS), by contrast, records all those who are unemployed, actively seeking work and available to start work in the next two weeks. Based on a continuous survey of 60,000 households, it

picks up around 1 million people not covered by the claimant count.

But even this widely-accepted measure excludes more than 2 million people, many of whom women, who do not have a job and would like to work. That "wide definition" LFS measure of unemployment now stands at 4.24 million.

The employment minister, Andrew Smith, said he hoped the move would help "restore public confidence in figures that had become widely discredited".

Paul Conway, the UU director, argued that the broader LFS measure should also be published monthly, "so we can see if the welfare-to-work approach is succeeding in bringing people back from the margins into the active labour market".

Councillors told to stamp out sleaze

Anne Perkins

CORRUPTION among councillors must be stamped out, says Lord Blair last Sunday as he told the modernisation of local government to his project of modernising Britain.

With a series of Labour sleaze cases in local government threatening to tarnish the party nationally, the Prime Minister said "I have corruption is not widespread but one case is too many".

As the party — once dogged by tales of "sleazy local" political corruption in local government — prepares to defend a record number of council seats in May, Mr Blair put clearing up local government at the heart of his programme to reform local involvement and restore respect.

Speaking at Labour's local government conference in Scarborough, Mr Blair promised to implement many of the recommendations from the Nolan commission's report on conduct in local government, including a "model" code of conduct. It will be up to local councils to introduce their own code, but it must include a system for investigating independently all allegations of misconduct.

Councillors and officials who are corrupt, or worse still corrupt, not only undermine their own claims to leadership, but tarnish the reputation of local government," he said.

Mr Blair also tried to persuade the audience of councillors and local party workers to welcome the idea of directly-elected mayors.

He tried to beguile councillors with a portrait of a new role for them too: "Instead of spending your time in fruitless meetings, you will be able to scrutinise in detail what council leaders are doing. Not wasting time in meetings will mean you'll be able to spend more time in your local communities."

But he warned councillors they could not expect the automatic return of powers taken away during the past 10 years of their rule unless they embraced change.

Mr Blair berated local councils for low turn-outs at elections. "The claims of local councils to speak and act for the people are too often weakened by their poor base of popular support," he said, pointing out that nearly half of all council elections over 35, and both mayoral and county minorities are underrepresented.

He also urged councillors to "be seen to be seen" by the public.

With laughter, he said he felt quite tickled by the jargon, reflecting the desperate desire among people with just a little bit of power over our lives to turn the simplest human activity, such as placing one foot in front of another, into something vague, intangible and pompous.

Ma Jackson said proudly that the Government was proposing to spend £25 million on walking in the next financial year. Thomas Brake (Lib Dem, Cumbria) called attention to the lack of a "national strategy on walking". The Tories now began to wheeze dangerously, like an old-fashioned steam engine on the point of exploding.

In the end of replying thus: "What in the name of the Lord is a national strategy on walking? Are we supposed to put video through every letterbox to show people how to do it? Do you want Walking Awareness weeks? How about a Walking Bib myself. Is the jargon, reflecting the desperate desire among people with just a little bit of power over our lives to turn the simplest human activity, such as placing one foot in front of another, into something vague, intangible and pompous."

GUARDIAN WEEKLY

February 15 1998

Car pollution 'costs £11 billion'

Paul Brown

TAXES on motorists should be applied to reflect the true cost of road transport, which adds £11 billion a year to health bills because of exhaust pollution, according to the British Lung Foundation.

It recommends a return of purchase tax on large-engined vehicles like the fashionable but gas-guzzling four-wheel-drives, but says big rises in petrol and diesel prices are the fairest way forward.

Most of the costs of motoring are in the purchase price of the vehicle, road tax and insurance, but the cost to the country is in the pollution the death rates from cardiac and respiratory disease. In the United States death rates were 37 per cent higher from these causes in the most polluted city compared with the least. The death rate in London increased by more than 10 per cent in a four-day autumn episode in December 1997.

The £11 billion bill is almost equally split between the extra premature deaths and increased illness. If congestion, accidents, road damage and global warming are added to the costs of motoring they reach a staggering £45.9 billion. Road users only pay a third of this sum in taxes.

Malcolm Green, president of the British Lung Foundation, said: "It makes economic and health sense to clean up the air in our cities as an urgent priority. Government and individuals must work together to end our love affair with the car."

Traffic is predicted to rise up to 87 per cent over the next 30 years. Although vehicles are producing fewer emissions, this will be more than outweighed by their number, and the distance people drive.

Diesel vehicles, which are expected to triple over the next 10 years, emit 100 per cent more particulates — poisonous microscopic particles — than petrol engines. These are the single most important cause of premature death.

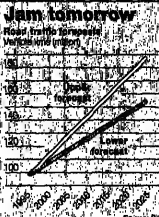
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BSE delay 'led to infection of extra 60,000 cattle'

James Melkie

SIXTY thousand cows might have escaped BSE infection if vets had acted as soon as the disease was first identified, a member of the Government's advisory body claimed this week.

The 14 months delay before scientists made a formal diagnosis could have had a "very, very significant effect" on the size of the epidemic, and the amount of infected meat entering the food chain, said Roy Anderson, Lincoln professor of zoology at Oxford University.

But a BBC television series, *Mad Cows And England*, made with the co-operation of the Ministry of Agriculture, claims that Carl Richardson, then a pathologist at the laboratory, first discovered evidence of a cattle disease similar to scrapie in sheep in September 1985.

The diagnosis was made on a sick cow from a farm near Midhurst, West Sussex, where the alarm was first raised at the end of 1984. The later formal identification came as a result of investigations into two outbreaks, one in Kent. Scientific experiments were launched and ministers were informed about the new disease the following summer. A ban on the use of animal protein in cattle feed, thought to be the main source of infection to cattle, was introduced a year later in June 1989.

Professor Anderson said: "Given that there was a slight delay during the exponential growth phase of the epidemic, the phase in which it is growing very rapidly, early intervention can have a dramatic effect on the course and this particular period, 1987 and 1988, was a period when the epidemic was growing extremely rapidly."

"Therefore, intervention 12 or 14 months earlier would have had a very, very significant effect if it had taken place."

It has been held for some time that cows were dying of BSE long before the formal identification. The BSE outbreak is expected to die out by about 2001. More than 2 million cattle have been killed because no animal over 30 months' old can be sold for human consumption.

Gold stars on the wane

Vivek Chaudhary

A BIT of encouragement from teachers is more effective than giving pupils 10 out of 10 for their homework, or even a gold star. But if a gentle word fails to get even the laziest of pupils going, then how about getting them to assess their own work?

A report published last week says teachers should stop marking schoolwork because it demotivates many pupils, and abandon competition in the classroom, such as the handing out of gold stars for those who do well.

The report, compiled by Paul Black and Dylan William of King's College, London, claims that getting pupils to assess their own work and teacher feedback can improve average achievement by as much as two GCSE grades per pupil.

Professor Black, architect of the first proposal for National Curriculum testing and assessment, said: "If you have a competitive culture in the classroom it's fine for those who do well but demotivates for those who don't. It leads to pupils competing on competition rather than on their learning needs."

The authors of the report, inside the Black Box, looked at 800 international studies on the effects of marking and positive feedback on pupils. They claim pupils who are given feedback and encouragement do much better than those given marks out of 10.

The report adds: "Pupils who get poor marks are led to believe they lack ability... so they 'retire' and try to build up their esteem in other ways."

The report also claims that the Government's emphasis on testing in schools, and school league tables, is counter-productive "and only helps reinforce low-achieving pupils' sense of inferiority".

A spokeswoman for the National Union of Teachers said: "Things like gold stars, little badges and house points are used in a positive way by teachers and encourage good behaviour and hard work... You can't have children marking their own work. It just wouldn't work."

A new framework of national tests to measure children's learning at almost every stage in primary school was announced by the Government. Allied to plans to introduce "baseline" testing to measure the capabilities of children when they start primary school at five, the new framework will leave six-year-olds as the only age group to escape national examination.



Figures that appeared to show that most poverty was temporary were "misleading", says Anthony Browne. PHOTOGRAPH BY JED MURRAY

Most poor 'are stuck in poverty trap'

Anthony Browne

POVERTY in the UK is far more persistent and deep-seated than was previously thought, according to a new report this week.

Poverty became more widespread under the Conservative but it was argued that it proved temporary for most individuals, who went on to find work and rise up the income ladder.

Figures often quoted by the Tories showed that half of those in the poorest 10 per cent of income groups were not there a year later.

But research by Professor John Hills, of the Research

Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion at the London School of Economics, shows that this figure is misleading.

"You can overplay the significance of income mobility," he says. "The vast majority of the poorest are actually fairly well stuck in poverty."

In his paper "Does income mobility mean we can stop worrying about poverty?" he says that although half of those in the poorest 10 per cent of society might not be there a year later, almost all "are either not moving very far, or are coming back very quickly".

The vast majority of those in the poorest group are unable to

escape the trap. They are either permanently poor, or at least strike it lucky for just one year before slipping back down again. Others might be cycling in and out of poverty, never escaping it permanently.

The greater understanding of the dynamics of poverty should help the Government formulate policies to tackle social exclusion, according to Hills.

"Welfare to work is helpful, but not a panacea," he says. "You don't solve the problems just by getting people into first jobs — and it doesn't cover pensioners, the disabled and lone parents with young children."

— The Observer

Weeks? How about a Walking Bib myself. Is the jargon, reflecting the desperate desire among people with just a little bit of power over our lives to turn the simplest human activity, such as placing one foot in front of another, into something vague, intangible and pompous."

Ma Jackson said proudly that the Government was proposing to spend £25 million on walking in the next financial year. Thomas Brake (Lib Dem, Cumbria) called attention to the lack of a "national strategy on walking". The Tories now began to wheeze dangerously, like an old-fashioned steam engine on the point of exploding.

In the end of replying thus: "What in the name of the Lord is a national strategy on walking? Are we supposed to put video through every letterbox to show people how to do it? Do you want Walking Awareness weeks? How about a Walking Bib myself. Is the jargon, reflecting the desperate desire among people with just a little bit of power over our lives to turn the simplest human activity, such as placing one foot in front of another, into something vague, intangible and pompous."

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Nigerian scam cheats Britain out of billions

Christopher Elliott

THE letter arrives marked "strictly confidential". It comes in an urgent business proposal from a high official purporting to be the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation.

"I have in my possession the sum of \$23.2 million (£13.1 million), which was actually generated from an over-invoiced contract sum in my Corporation. Right now, I write to solicit your assistance in the transfer of this fund into your account."

And the punter is, perhaps, lulled.

That letter is one of a million that last week estimated were sent by criminals from Nigeria, mostly Nigeria, last week. They are of the advance fee fraud (AFF) that starts by promising to divide the spoils of a scam with the punters gullible enough to hand over up to £50,000 to finish the deal. They never see the cash again.

The growth of the fraud, often used to finance crimes such as international drug dealing and arms smuggling, has prompted the formation of a

spectral squad based at the National Criminal Intelligence Service's London headquarters.

Even charities have been sucked into the scam by means of a different style of letter promising that the organisation is the beneficiary of a will.

The new aquid estimates the fraud costs the UK at least £3.5 billion a year. "In 1997 over 68,000 AFF letters from these groups were handed to police, and we believe there are many more in circulation. People should not reply to them."

Police estimate that of every 100,000 recipients, about 1,000 respond and 10 send money.

A pilot scheme involving the squad, which began on October 31, has already led to 25 arrests and the recovery of 26 kilos of cocaine, 95 stolen credit cards, five forged passports, and five cheques with a face value of \$544 million (£339 million) in total.

The formation of the squad is backed by the Nigerian government, which is concerned at the effect on the nation's image abroad as the problem has mushroomed over the past 10 years.

Now people are conned

A TYPICAL advanced fee fraud involves the form of a letter promising to be from a high official in the Nigerian central bank or a state treasury who has managed to over-invoice a contract, generating a personal profit.

In return for helping to smuggle money out of the country, the recipient is offered a percentage, and a small sum of money will be requested.

Readers may have been puzzled by the words CURRENTLY SUPPRESSED that appeared over the advertisement below in last week's edition. This was a production error. Apologies to The Fry Group

Tax freedom?

To be free of the UK tax net and capitalise on your British expatriate status, it is essential to take steps before you leave, whilst you are away and in advance of your return home. Our booklet 'The British Expatriate' outlines what should be done — and when to do it.

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Address _____

Ten billion dollar man goes on a silver-buying spree

WARREN Buffett — the \$10 billion man who has become an investment legend — has week-plunged into the silver market, buying a fifth of the world's supply, writes Dan Attkisson.

The 67-year-old "sage of Omaha" announced that he now controls nearly 120 million ounces, worth almost \$1 billion at current prices.

News that Mr. Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway investment trust had piled into a market already reeling from allegations of price-fixing propelled the price to a 10-year high and revived memories of the attempt in the late 1970s by Texan speculators Bunker and Herbert Hunt to corner the world's silver. Their \$1.3 billion buying spree

ended in disaster in 1980 and they had to be bailed out by the US government.

The new move sparked friction between the secretive London silver market and the more open New York Mercantile Exchange. Poland's KGHM company, Europe's largest silver producer, called on the London bullion market to publish figures for stockpiles of precious metals held in city vaults, to quell suspicions of market rigging.

The London Bullion Market Association meanwhile changed a key trading rule — that delivery must take place within five days — by extending the period to 15 days because the usual delivery methods are not up to handling the volume sparked by Mr. Buffett's purchases.

The market wants to avoid any of its members having to default as a result of its payment.

Mr. Buffett began to buy last summer, when silver languished at about \$4.50 an ounce. New film technologies — dispensing with the silver traditionally used — and growing investment demand for gold had depressed the price.

Last week it had broken through \$7 for the first time since 1988 as speculators around the world followed Mr. Buffett's lead.

Johnson Matthey, one of the world's biggest silver refiners, said that it had doubled output at its UK refinery in the past few weeks to meet the new demand. It has been taking customers' scrap silver, unsuitable for the London bullion mar-

ket, and refining it into ingots which can then be traded.

However, more cautious voices warned that Mr. Buffett had proved catastrophic in the past. Jewellery buyers are likely to balk at paying inflated prices for silver jewellery, especially when gold is so cheap, according to one analyst, and industrial users will find substitutes, should silver become too expensive.

Rhona O'Connell, analyst with broker T Moore, said Mr. Buffett had "spotted a window of opportunity and duly dived through it". But she warned that silver was unlikely to touch \$8 an ounce and very unlikely to return to the near-\$50 level reached in the heyday of the Hunt brothers.

Terminal struggle for wire power

Reuters is fighting for its commercial life in the face of fierce competition and accusations of industrial espionage, writes Dan Attkisson

SENIOR Reuters executives in London will this week come face to face with grim-faced City analysts keen to hear what the venerable news and information company has to say regarding allegations of industrial espionage in the United States.

For years these same analysts have smiled on Reuters as a favourite counter on the Stock Exchange gaming table, a deep-blue plaque, a British name that lends it field worldwide. One recent investment circular on Reuters carried a headline that said "Lull, lull, lull".

They are not amused by breathless newspaper reports of a grand jury investigation in New York. They do not expect to see the Reuters name appear in the same sentence as that of the US Attorney's Office or the FBI Computer Crimes Unit.

Their humour is unlikely to have been improved by Reuters' full-year figures, due this week, which are forecast to show pre-tax profits dropped during 1997 from \$1.14 billion to about \$1.12 billion. The alleged dirty tricks in the US have played no part in this earnings fall; rather, Reuters has been buffeted by the Asian meltdown and the strength of sterling.

As more and more deals are struck in electronic marketplaces, the prizes are glittering indeed. Every one of rival Bloomberg's screens brings in \$1,100/\$1,200 a month in rent, and the company has 300,000 such terminals around the world. Reuters has perhaps quarter of a million. But the price of failure, as Dow Jones Markets has discovered, is gruesome.

At the heart of the allegation about dirty tricks is the esoteric world of securities-analysis software, the workings inside the boxes of tricks that allow traders to collate data on shares and bonds at the push of a button. Bloomberg has been ahead in the early nineties and it is no secret that Reuters has been trying hard to catch up.

As part of that effort, Reuters acquired the company now known as Reuters Analytics in Stamford, Connecticut, at the centre of the US At-



Screen stars... Reuters and Bloomberg in use at Merrill Lynch

PHOTO BY DAVID SULLIVAN

torney's Office investigation. Initial allegations suggested Analytics improperly obtained or even stole "proprietary code" — copyrighted software — from Bloomberg, and that the code may have been used in its Reuters 3000 machine, the powerful new product considered critical to its growth prospects.

A former Bloomberg employee it was suggested, had been used as a middleman in the theft.

Last week Reuters claimed the rumour with a lengthy statement in which it acknowledged it had hired a consultancy to carry out analysis of the competition, but denied any suggestions of theft. It said the US authorities were examining whether Analytics had induced the consultancy to provide Bloomberg data to Reuters in breach of subscription agreements.

Furthermore, the inquiry will investigate any possible incorporation of "reverse-engineered" Bloomberg software into Reuters products.

The crisis is already taking its toll in the City. NatWest Markets has downgraded Reuters shares from "add" to "hold", pending clarification. Some investors have moved away from "hold" to "sell" — \$30 billion of market value was wiped off Reuters as the affair exploded, although that was trimmed back to about \$1.6 billion by the company's reassurance last week that it faced, at worst, limited damage. Persuasive talking will be re-

quired to convince the assembled investors that Reuters is not losing its footing in an information market turning more ferociously competitive by the day.

The world of wire services used not to be like this. Chaps in graph-paper shirts sat at long desks, took pieces of paper from teleprinters, scribbled a few amendments and passed the result over to transmitters, who would duly type it out on to the tape.

All that changed in the seventies. Gyrating exchange rates and worldwide financial instability created a demand for accurate, minute-by-minute data. The US authorities were examining whether Analytics had induced the consultancy to provide Bloomberg data to Reuters in breach of subscription agreements.

But as Reuters was fitting its accretions to every trading desk in the world and its currency-monitoring roadsters to the wallstreets of every trader from San Francisco to Hong Kong, Sainsbury's, the Wall Street bank, was adding a not entirely regrettable farewell to the outspoken Mike Bloomberg. Mr. Bloomberg became Bloomberg, and by the end of 1987 Bloomberg was in London, its core of people telling anyone who would

In Brief

THE proposed \$1.6 billion mega-merger between SmithKline Beecham and Glaxo, which would create the go-head from European US regulators, and the two groups are likely to be forced to sell some of their directly competing brands.

RUPERT Murdoch's News Corporation is under attack from an international team of tax investigators as part of Treasury drive to clamp down on multinational companies using international loopholes to cut paying tax.

THE global alliance between British Airways and American Airlines is set for approval from US and European regulators after the latest meeting between President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Tony Blair. The deal would give the companies more than 60 per cent of traffic on the North American route.

MORE THAN \$440 million was wiped off the value of British Biotechnology as the company revealed that the release of one of its drugs, Zalcitabine, has been delayed.

THE Bank of England said homeowners and business-led post-election interest rate cuts when it pegged the cost of borrowing at 7.25 per cent against a backdrop of a slowing economy and continued uncertainty about the impact of the Asian financial crisis.

THE strength of the pound and poor prices for raw materials chemicals cost ICI more than \$350 million last year. The group revealed a 36 per cent annual profit — from \$985 million to \$627 million.

MORE than 3226 million of British Airways this financial year because of the strength of the pound, the airline announced. The airline said the pound was the worst for cost-cutting and a 364 million reduction in the cost of aviation fuel.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Spotting rate	Banking rate
Available	2.4930-2.4971	2.5000-2.5039
Australia	2.05-2.0525	2.0550-2.0575
Belgium	61.11-61.21	61.25-61.35
Canada	2.5000-2.5015	2.5050-2.5065
Denmark	11.26-11.30	11.35-11.40
France	6.48-6.49	6.50-6.51
Germany	2.9011-2.9027	2.9050-2.9066
Hong Kong	1.1002-1.1002	1.1050-1.1050
Italy	2.0628-2.0635	2.0650-2.0657
Japan	202.00-202.02	202.50-202.52
Netherlands	2.5000-2.5015	2.5050-2.5065
New Zealand	2.70-2.70	2.75-2.75
Norway	12.24-12.26	12.30-12.32
Portugal	202.00-202.02	202.50-202.52
Spain	166.00-166.00	166.50-166.50
Sweden	14.34-14.35	14.40-14.41
Switzerland	2.5000-2.5000	2.5050-2.5050
UK	1.0000-1.0000	1.0050-1.0050
US	1.5000-1.5000	1.5050-1.5050

Source: Reuters. Rates are for 100 units of foreign currency against 1 British pound. Bank rates are for 100 units of foreign currency against 1 British pound.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
February 1998

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
February 1998

Dodik turns on his own Serb nationalists

Christian Lacombe
in Banja Luka

IN NOVEMBER last year, a portrait of Radovan Karadzic, the ultra-nationalist Serb leader, was painted by an indicted war criminal, adorned the office of Dord Mikić, the local president of the SDS. The painting has now been taken down and sits facing the wall.

Like his boss, Mikić has decided to keep a low profile. Isolated, he has been observing the constant warring and fighting at Banja Luka's former arts centre, which Biljana Plavcic, president of the Bosnian Serb Republic, has occupied for the past few months.

For new prime minister, Milorad Dodik, has now joined her there with his government. Mikić knows he will soon have to leave his office and look for other premises.

So is the SDS being pushed out? A process of destruction has begun, and naturally it will continue, Dodik told Le Monde. Dodik, prime minister on January 18 by the parliament of the Serb entity in the absence of members of the SDS and its last-right ally, the Serbian Radical Party, Dodik has begun a race against time.

We have to act fast and get the quality out of this mess, he says. "If the population is given an acceptable standard of living, it will vote for Karadzic. We have to fight corruption, redistribute money, pay people wages and create jobs."

Dodik ordered 45 bank accounts to be closed in Pale, the ultra-nationalist stronghold, and sidelined some entrepreneurs who had remained loyal to Karadzic. His interior ministry took control of all police forces. On January 30, he got the government transferred from Pale to Banja Luka. "Pale is becoming a little more isolated every day," he says.

Dodik, a 35-year-old businessman and former reformer who through his wife supported every peace initiative and kept in contact with leading Bosnian Muslims and Croats as a pragmatist.

The Dayton accord needs to be applied to the letter, he explains. "Refugees must return home, and all of them. The Americans and the UN must make sure the institutions of the Serb Republic and the Croat-Muslim Federation are the two entities making up Bosnia-Herzegovina must start working."

"Banja Luka is looking increasingly like a mini Sarajevo," says a French writer who is moving in. "The Americans are moving in. They're everywhere and full of ideas. People round here say that if a street is flooded because of faulty pipes there's no need to worry because Dodik will build a bridge within an hour."

Nickel deal spurs New Caledonia talks

Christian Wéry in Nouméa

CLASHES as though a great weight has been taken off my mind," Victor Tutugoro, spokesman for the executive of New Caledonia's independence movement, the Socialist Kanak National Liberation Front (FLNKS), when a draft agreement between two nickel-mining companies, Eramet and SMSP, was signed in the New Caledonian capital, Nouméa, on February 2. The FLNKS was, he said, a victory for the movement.

Under the agreement, the two companies will exchange nickel deposits, and a nickel reprocessing plant will be built in the north of the island. This will allow talks on New Caledonia's political future,

which had been stalled for two years, to restart.

Bernard Lapeze, president of the Union Calédonienne, the party with the most radical line on the nickel issue, said "an important and indispensable step had been accomplished as regards the factory in the north."

There is also a sense of relief among New Caledonians as a whole, who were concerned last week that road-blocks set up by the FLNKS activists might spark fresh clashes between loyalists and separatists.

The agreement between Eramet and SMSP marks the end of wrangling that lasted two years, a period during which the separatist movement became deeply split

while at the same time mustering fresh grassroots support.

Since April 1996, the FLNKS had insisted that access to mining deposits in the north should be a precondition for a resumption of talks on New Caledonia's future status, which is due to be put to a referendum later this year.

The so-called "mining precondition" caused deep divergences between the various parties, leading to the FLNKS, particularly between the Palkia, which asked for the precondition to be waived in February 1997, and the Union Calédonienne, which always wanted to keep it.

The loyalist Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République (RRCR), which is headed by the

high office strikes me as crucial."

People in Sarajevo realise there are lessons to be learnt from what is going on in the Serb Republic. With a general election in September, the two Social Democratic parties have just started talks to look at the possibility of merging. "If Dodik's policy is successful in the Serb Republic, the electorate may be prompted to vote for non-nationalists for the first time since the war," Zvenkovic says.

Although he is a man in a hurry, Dodik knows how to take his time with controversial issues. He has not, for example, ordered his police to arrest alleged Serb war criminals. And he hopes that the town of Brcko, which Serbs and Muslims are still fighting to control, will remain in the Serb Republic. "The survival of our entity hinges on that, because it is a region that links the east and west of the republic."

Dodik's power base is still not secure enough to enable him to make unpopular decisions. He knows the SDS is waiting in the wings. Should he put a foot wrong, Karadzic's portrait could be rehanging.

(February 4)

Fresh ideas on nuclear policy

EDITORIAL

THIS time, the Jospin method has worked: the French prime minister has managed to push through major policy decisions on nuclear energy without too many cracks opening up in his government.

After the general policy speech he gave in June 1997 shortly after coming to office, Lionel Jospin did a lot of listening and precious little deciding. There ensued a fierce debate on nuclear energy within his "pluri" parliamentary majority, with the Greens on one side and the Socialists and Communists on the other.

The Greens pressed for a re-evaluation of France's nuclear policy, which they said should be symbolised by the immediate closure of the Superphénix fast-breeder reactor at Crep-Merville in the upper Rhône valley. The Socialists and Communists believed that the nuclear energy sector should continue to operate as in the past, with further research conducted into the incineration of nuclear waste.

Each side can pride itself on emerging from the debate without a loss of face, since neither gave any ground on essential points. Jospin confirmed that France's present energy policy, which relies mainly on nuclear power, would be maintained.

But he also provided opponents of that policy with cause for satisfaction when he advocated a diversification of energy sources and genuine transparency in the nuclear industry. In this he was following public opinion. A survey of the population believes that nuclear power stations should continue to operate. On the issue of storing waste, however, there is great mistrust: 82 per cent have misgivings about the way nuclear waste is handled.

Jospin will still have to quell the fears of those about to lose their jobs at Superphénix. There are doubts that the 100 million francs (\$16.25 million) he has allocated for their redeployment will be enough.

There can be no doubt that France's energy policy has taken a radical turn. The government's determination to explore diversification is reflected in its plans for a tax on energy consumption that will be partly used to develop the renewable energy sector. This new approach suggests that there will be a choice of several options when the time comes for France to decide on nuclear power stations to be phased out from 2010.

But the most important shift in policy is the government's announcement that it is to introduce a bill on transparency in the nuclear industry and on its regulation. Jospin has provided French citizens with the guarantee of security and transparency. He hopes, in return, that they will continue to accept nuclear energy as a provider of electricity.

(February 4)

Handwritten note in a box: "Jospin's 116"

Peddlers of Violence and Death

Colman McCarthy

SPILLS OF WAR
The Human Cost of America's
Arms Trade
By John Tirman
Free Press, 310pp. \$25

Critics of American military violence and cold violence. Not is the slaughtering of human beings close up, as in Vietnam when peasants were shot — "greased" was the term — because they may have been hiding Vietcong weapons fire, bloodied bodies drop. Cold violence occurs when boardroom decisions mean death and suffering to people well removed by time and geography.

In Spills of War John Tirman examines with dispassionate resolve and clarity the mechanics of cold violence — the specificity of arms lobbyists, corporate weapons exporters, pro-military politicians, Washington policymakers and think-tank rationalizers who are re-made from the gore and misdeeds that can result when America's technology of death — fighter jets, attack helicopters, missiles, land mines, tanks, guns — is profitably sold to client states. Tirman's reporting, which is rich with historical allusions and fair-minded analysis of what he calls "the ingrained habit of silbo-bolito of the arms business," aligns well with the thought of the French worker-philosopher

Simone Weil in 1945: "Whether the mask is labeled Fascism, Democracy or Dictatorship of the Proletariat, our great adversary remains the Apparatus — the bureaucracy, the police, the military... No matter what the circumstances, the worst betrayal will always be to subordinate ourselves to this Apparatus, and to trample underfoot in its service, all human values in ourselves and in others."

In Tirman's mind, such subordination prevails today in the United States: "In a country now in the grip of a debate over values, it is astounding that so little heed is given to the values underlying the promiscuous provision of lethal weapons."

Tirman, executive director of the Winston Foundation for World Peace in Washington for the past 10 years, reports that in the mid-1990s the U.S. weapons industry had a 70 percent market share of sales to Third World nations. More than \$200 billion worth of arms will have been exported by the end of the decade. With Spills of War, Tirman joins a worthy list of independent analysts who, in season and out, keep assembling the facts of America's modern arms trade. Among them are Seymour Maitman, author of The Permanent War Economy; William Hertzog of the World Policy Institute; Sanford Gottlieb, author of Defense Addict; Can Ameteh, Kick the Habit; and Edward Shargel and her annual report, World Military and Social Expenditures.

and A. Ernest Fitzgerald, author of High Priests of Waste. Spills of War differs journalistically from the toil of those authors by reporting from the field on how cold violence in the United States becomes hot violence in the villages of southeastern Turkey. In the name of quashing Kurdish dissent and guerrillas by military force, which meant avoiding any compromise to gain political solutions, in recent years Turkey's military has killed thousands of villagers and displaced 2.5 million. By Tirman's numbers, Ankara's military might

Seasoned by years of work in Washington, Tirman shyly meets the challenge. Strong sentiments are voiced without shrillness. The impact of factual and credible information carries his arguments. One of these is that president after president has not allowed the grisly results of the arms-export business to dampen support for arms corporations — Lockheed Martin, United Technologies, Sikorsky, General Dynamics and others — that sell abroad.

It may surprise some readers that Jimmy Carter was one of the enthusiasts. As a candidate in June 1976, Tirman reports, Carter preached: "We cannot be both the world's leading champion of peace and the world's leading supplier of the weapons of war." Once he was elected, however, the fervor vanished. Early in his presidency, Tirman writes, Carter "approved the largest sale of U.S. hardware in the decade — 200 advanced fighter jets to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Israel."

Later he recommended sending the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), the "flying radar," an exceptionally advanced technology, to Iran and Saudi Arabia. Tirman quotes George Kennan's statement that his conclusion — that the

human suffering in one war zone or another "is a symptom of a systematic malfunction in the capitalist, and more vacuous American foreign policy" — cannot be fully dismissed as just more liberal grousing against militarists.

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"Never since World War II has there been so far-reaching a militarization of thought and discourse in the capital. As an unresponsive, arrogant, plunged into its midst, could conclude that the last hope of peace, nonmilitary solutions had been exhausted — that from now only weapons, however used, could count."

Tirman could have written a book three or four times as large as this one. He tells in little about the lives and personal histories of American arms peddlers. What are their ethics? Which schools shaped their thinking? Which churches or synagogues? Do they visit the world's bloodied war zones to meet the families of people killed by their weapons? Tirman mentions Norman Augustine, the former chief executive of Lockheed Martin, America's largest weapons company, only once, and gives him Bowen, the vice secretary of commerce, glancing treatment. Tirman describes Bowen as "the king of peddlers" in his boosting of the US arms industry on the congressional floor. While chapters on Augustine and Bowen might have fleshed out Tirman's thesis that the weapons trade is run by human beings at the expense of other human beings.

Tirman's inimitable criticism — also on display in his earlier books, The Failure of Star Wars and Empty Promise — isn't likely to run out of deeds worthy of scorn in addition to the overall excellence of the reporting in Spills of War. Tirman will remain poised for some time at the end of Carter's term. The hot violence goes on.

GORDON WHEATLY
January 16, 1998

Asian treasure trove starts to sink

BRITISH universities are facing a sharp drop in numbers of students from the Far East who are currently being in more than \$200 million a year in revenue.

Students from the collapse of financial markets in the region could have severe repercussions on some institutions that have become increasingly dependent on fees from overseas students as the British government squeezed their income from home students.

Not only have universities aggressively recruited a broad over the past five or six years, but they have also started to raise the fees for both undergraduates and postgraduates in their search for income.

Foreign students have in fact been subsidizing their British classmates. In some subjects such as engineering, where fees have been raised to recruit home students, universities have been able to keep departments viable by making up numbers (and income) from abroad.

Institutions typically charge between £8,000 (£9,900) and £10,000 a year for classroom-based courses, £15,500 for intensive courses and £15,500 for doctoral courses. In the lucrative market for MBAs, courses vary widely, from around £25,000 to £30,000, according to a report last year by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals.

Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore together send more students than any other country outside the European Union, apart from the United States. Several British institutions have also set up programmes in these countries, taught and validated by their staff. These are worth millions of pounds and are vulnerable to cutbacks as a result of the steep recession.

In Korea the government has

banished non-essential foreign travel and the ministry of education has appealed to citizens to save foreign currency by not studying abroad.

The situation will last two or three years. In the short term there will be a reduction from Korea and other Far Eastern countries," said Kevin Vancutser, of the British Council's marketing department.

Education agents who place Korean students abroad have registered a 30 to 40 per cent drop in inquiries. "It is symptomatic of what is happening over the whole region."

The British Council is putting a brave face on developments, hoping to hang on to existing numbers and seeing opportunities in distance learning and franchised courses in Pacific countries.



ACADEMIC POSTS & COURSES 21

Counting on numbers

1996/7 students in UK

Hong Kong	8,200
Japan	4,700
China	2,500
South Korea	1,800

Pacific-based companies as well as government departments are likely to recruit fewer graduates, making the risk of foreign study all the greater for prospective students.

The crash has come at a bad time for universities, hitting them financially before the imposition of tuition fees on home students will start to provide extra income.

Ministers will doubtless exhort universities to find other areas to recruit from, but they will find it difficult. The long colonial links mean a large number of students were proficient in English — not the case in Latin America or the Middle East. After and the Indian subcontinent have the language links but not the booming Tiger economies which — until a few months ago — could finance large numbers of students abroad.

Lighting the Way

Jeff Sheeol

PILLAR OF FIRE
America in the King Years, 1963-65
By Taylor Branch
Simon & Schuster, 746pp. \$30

IN PILLAR OF FIRE, the second volume of Taylor Branch's civil rights trilogy, Martin Luther King Jr. is nothing quite so simple as a man or myth. To Branch, King is a metaphor — "the best and most important metaphor for American history in the watermarked postwar years." King is the "pillar of fire" of the book's title, buttressing the civil rights movement with his moral strength and energizing it with his rhetorical fervor.

Branch's first volume, the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Paving the Way*, spanned a full decade: 1949 of *Pillar of Fire* covers less than three years. Still, these were, as Branch argues, "the movement's peak years." After the brutality of Birmingham in May 1963, Branch explains, "leaders of every rank groped for responses to a coming flood. Race, so long conceived as a distant element of nature, now-roaring as a bank of rain clouds, suddenly bubbled up everywhere to sweep away the prevailing notion that passion was the enemy rather than the friend of racial good-will. Where reason had twiddled, a tide of emotion swept forward conviction that segregation was fragile and that human nature contained untapped reserves for improvement."

Branch describes the torrent that followed — Freedom Summer, the passage of the civil rights bill, the shootings in St. Augustine and the riots in New York City, the murders of Medgar Evers and Malcolm X — in gripping detail, his prose moving

swiftly and effortlessly from the White House to a Selma, Alabama jail to Bogus Chitto Swamp in Mississippi, where the car of three murdered civil rights workers was found in June 1964. This is, for the most part, heavily trafficked territory, so Branch may be forgiven if *Pillar of Fire* is neither as seminal nor as singular an achievement as *Paving the Way*. But, here, as before, Branch applies an intricate, seamless web of politics and personalities, triumph and tragedy.

The subtitle of Branch's trilogy is "America in the King Years." Yet it is not nothing that *Pillar of Fire* begins not with a nonviolent victory but with a bloody battle between Black Muslims and Los Angeles police in 1962. This riot, virtually forgotten by historians, heralded the arrival of Malcolm X in the national arena, and from the first pages of Branch's book one senses that the political ground has shifted beneath King. Malcolm X, perched in the first volume (in which Malcolm X gains three brief references) but critical to the second. Thus, in a radical leap, Branch moves from the March on Washington to the Birmingham protests, then to the assassination of Dr. King. Since it is not always clear where Branch is headed, this opening section, like the rest of the book, would benefit from clearer signposts.

Still, *Pillar of Fire* is an indispensible book and an enduring celebration of Dr. King's life and the civil rights community as a triumph over adversity and the end of legal segregation before violence and division tore the movement apart.



intuitive claim that King and Malcolm were kindred spirits of both were "tumbling through... extremes between paradoxical and ecstatic, glorious and despair." Both were isolated by inflicting associates and lounded by enemies known and unknown. Both were masters of improvisation. Both feared the assassin's knife.

Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. animate but do not dominate Branch's story. The author is as skillful as his subjects. Branch renders usung actors like Vernon Dahmer, a Mississippi farmer, as carefully and completely as he does power players like Lyndon Johnson, Adam Clayton Powell, Alard Lowenstein, and a host of rabbis and clergymen make his but occasionally overstates in *Pillar of Fire* Ben Muhammad al-Bashir, who was wooed by Malcolm before being won over by Elijah Muhammad, gets his own chapter.

The book's breadth of Branch's cast of characters is one of his book's greatest virtues. However, he must back track considerably to introduce figures like Malcolm X, perched in the first volume (in which Malcolm X gains three brief references) but critical to the second. Thus, in a radical leap, Branch moves from the March on Washington to the Birmingham protests, then to the assassination of Dr. King. Since it is not always clear where Branch is headed, this opening section, like the rest of the book, would benefit from clearer signposts.

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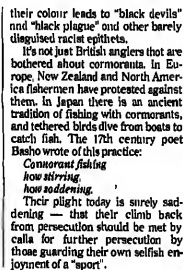
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Quick crossword no. 405

- 1 One is down in them (5)
- 2 Sapper (5,8)
- 3 Rock and lighthouse off Fife (8)
- 4 Retriever (3,3)
- 5 Employed (4)
- 8 TV's rag-and-bone-man (7,3,3)



s b c d a f s

D Bronstein v R Vedder, Hooogeveen Open, Netherlands 1997. At 73, former world challenger Bronstein still has quick tactical eye. Here he placed down with his queen both rooks all attacked. How White (to play) win quickly?

No 2509: 1... Qxg5 2 h3 Rxd2 3 Kd2 Bd6 4 Kh1 mate.

Second Division Brechin 2, East Flie 1;
 Urquhart 4, Forfar 0; Queen Stn 0, Clyde 2;
 Fraser 1, Strathern 2; Inw CT 3, Clydebar 2;
 Leading Positions 1, City Brechin (21-41);
 2, Urquhart (20-39); 3, Queen of Stn (22-32).

Third Division Abdon 3, E Strath 2; Alton 2,
 Queens Park 0; Cowdall 3, Arboreath 1;
 Dunbarton 0, Ross Co 1; Montrose 2;
 Service 2;
 Leading Positions 1, Alton (22-43);
 2, Arboreath (23-40); 3, Ross County (21-39).

round meeting with Manchester United at Old Trafford following a 3-1 victory over Tottenham Hotspur whose miserable season took another battering. To compound the London club's problems, Jurgen Klinsmann was taken to hospital with a broken jaw and could be out for the next five games.

In other replayed ties, Reading

more lavish and more heavily commercialised than any of their predecessors. Olympic opening ceremonies are usually held in the evening, but for the first time in living memory the Games opened when people in Japan were having their late breakfast. The shift was apparently designed to satisfy the prime-time slots of US television.

from cancer, and it was by no means certain that he would survive. But he went through chemotherapy, habilitation and all the dark depression to emerge victorious. Last week he beat Mark Chalaoer 15-11 15-13 in the final of the British national championships in Manchester. Parke is now ranked No 1 in the world.

A lot of undistinguished, tetchy football followed until minutes before half-time when Adams headed back Bergman free-kick from the byline and Hughes's short head glanced ball past De Goey.

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